

"MY FORMER FRIENDS . . ."

By GEORGE MORGENSTERN

(Historical note: The following address, appraising the progress of the Presidential campaign which he was not chosen to make, was delivered by William Elphinstone before a rally at Bad Axe, Michigan. Elphinstone's addresses in pursuit of the Presidential nomination were published by HUMAN EVENTS in the issues of June 4 and July 2, 1952.)

IT IS DEMONSTRABLE through all experience that rationality never governs in American politics. Therefore, I am forced to predict that General Eisenhower will limp home triumphantly aboard his warhorse. The nomination of General Eisenhower made no sense whatsoever. The inevitable logic confronting the Convention dictated the nomination of another man, namely Senator Taft. Three times Mr. Taft had picked his party off the floor following defeat and put it together again. Morally and intellectually he was its unchallenged leader, and in himself personified the values which the party was supposed to represent. Miss Dorothy Thompson was never more cogent than when, in expressing the outlook of Taft's followers, she quoted a carpenter who urged her to support Taft, and described in his terms what those values were:

"We are the people who pay our taxes even when we hate what the government does with them; who regard it as a disgrace to expect our fellow citizens to support us; who believe we should get what we earn but earn what we get; whose sons are the first to volunteer in America's wars and who expect if we get in them to win them; and who know darn well nobody is ever going to protect America but Americans. We are the vanishing Americans, pushed around by big business, big labor, big government and big military. And if we lose this election we are finished. Eisenhower won't win it for us even if he wins. He'll win it for another branch of the same people who are running the country now."

This was the viewpoint that sought expression through Senator Taft, and the Senator was equipped to give it expression. He was informed on the issues and the arguments, and was capable of addressing himself to them with the remorseless efficiency of a buzz saw. In contradistinction, General Eisenhower, as is by now apparent, was entirely uninformed about anything and was competent only to catch his feet in his suspenders every time he opened his mouth.

Yet, sight unseen, and even in advance of any personal profession of party attachment, the General's candidacy was espoused by an unlikely set of New Deal newspapers and syndicated columnists, all declaring the sudden conviction that the nation's well-being demanded that the two-party system be preserved through a change of Administration. It seems obvious that this dedication was inspired by only two considerations: that the

General's sponsors really wanted precisely what Washington had been giving them, especially as concerns foreign policy, and that inasmuch as they feared that Senator Taft would not only beat the Democrat but would change all this, it was imperative to beat him for the nomination.

Here, in pursuance of the immutable law that irrationality must prevail under all political circumstances, enters the first reason why Eisenhower has to win. He is bound to attain a Republican victory for the paradoxical reason that thereby he will assure the perpetuation of the New Deal creed.

THE SECOND REASON why Eisenhower is bound to win is that his sponsors misbranded him and sold him to the party under false grade labeling. They represented him as capable of appealing to and reconciling the most diverse elements, as witness the supposed success of his Atlantic treaty mission — indeed a dubious claim.

Eisenhower's remote control managers also attributed to him, through some mystic alchemy of personality, a gift of projecting conviction and sincerity, which, it was said, would sweep the nation like a prairie fire. He was supposed to possess a gift of gab which made the most humdrum copybook maxim shine like an inspiration of rare and refreshing novelty. In truth, having at first said, "If the people want me, they will know where to find me", the General was compelled to take off after them in the most importunate fashion even to gain for himself the nomination. Since then his discourse on government has had all of the persuasion of a schoolboy come ill prepared to recitation. The polished Stevenson is miles ahead on points, but I prefer to believe that, like the ill-starred Sugar Ray Robinson, he will yet knock himself out by his own exertions.

These spurious attributions of peculiar virtue cannot be abandoned without some reference to the most colossal confidence game of all, perpetrated in the General's behalf. I refer to the great convention fight for the "fair play" amendment, dedicated to the proposition that foul play was the most assured means of permanently disposing of Mr. Taft. This controversy centered on the custody of delegates from certain Republican rotten boroughs of the South.

Any moralities (however slight) involved in the adherence of these delegations in the convention might have predisposed toward the view that the faithful professionals, savoring at last a favoring wind in a post office year, should have been allowed to cling to their preference for Senator Taft. This position, however, was disputed on the ground that large infusions of new blood had altered the character of the Republican Party (South) in favor of General Eisenhower.

In this connection, I cite the post-convention testimony of the *Times-Picayune* of New Orleans, that "there are only 1,443 registered Republicans in New Orleans and maybe 2,500 in the whole state". This newspaper confirms that any votes for Eisenhower "will be Democratic and not Republican votes".

Similarly, the contention was advanced by those who called themselves "Texas Republicans for Eisenhower" that, among the issues involved in seating them at the Convention, were these: "Whether the Republican Party can go to the public with clean hands in November and ask the voters to throw out the degraded and debauched Democratic administration; whether Texas and other southern states can ever have a two-party system, (and) whether new voters and dissatisfied Democrats will be allowed to join the Republican party."

The outcome was that the regular Democrats, in state convention, decided to urge all Democrats to vote for Eisenhower and Nixon, so that Texas effectively becomes a one-party state, with that party in possession of both party labels. We are presented with the anomaly that "the degraded and debauched Democratic administration" is to be thrown out by degraded and debauched Democrats. Thus there is more than a little to the contention of the Taft camp that the question in Texas and other southern states was "whether the voters of one party are to be allowed to nominate their own candidates and candidates of the opposing party".

WE COME NOW TO the cream of the jest. This was the assertion that the nomination of General Eisenhower, *ipso facto*, would result in a reconstitution and rebirth of the Republican Party, in which that element conveniently named the Old Guard would suffer expulsion and disgrace. This thesis dodged the plain logic that the Eisenhower nomination was engineered by those very forces which were entitled to be known as the Old Guard. Eisenhower could not possibly have emerged had it not been for the agency of Governor Dewey and his associates representing the forces of Wall Street and internationalism, which had successfully dominated the party since 1940. If men who had failed to control the party through four successive campaigns were to be known as the Old Guard, what are we to call those who had been in the driver's seat through those repeated calamities?

In any event, a clamor arose from the minaret of Times Square to drive into outer darkness all who had favored the aspirations of Senator Taft. A "Republican revolution" would "have been successfully accomplished" only when the Old Guard should no longer "retain a significant voice in the top councils of the party". The "anachronistic voices of reaction on domestic policy" must not be tolerated. The "Roosevelt revolution" must be acknowledged, and its "reforms" must be stamped "permanently into the pattern of American life".

Although unconditional surrender could scarcely require more than this, there were additional special conditions. One was that the Republican party confess that "if ever there was a truly moral war the Korean war is it". The other was that Senator McCarthy be disavowed by name; that he and Senator Jenner, because of their *lese majesté* in giving an accurate description of the stupidity of General Marshall, be denied a ride on the nonexistent coattails of the Eisenhower battle jacket.

These conditions, brashly asserted in the first flush of victory, were justified, in the words of the *Washington Post*, on the grounds that "disgruntled Taftites" had nowhere else to go. The august Mr. Lippmann warned Eisenhower to be firm: "Otherwise . . . the Old Guard will sit out this defeat as they have so many others." Eighteen days later, Mr. Lippmann sounded a more ominous note: "If the Republicans are defeated for the sixth time, and defeated under Eisenhower and after the fight that took place at the convention, their party may fall completely into the hands of its irreconcilable and ruthless factions."

ALTHOUGH, like a good boy, General Eisenhower did most of what he was told, his "crusade" limped to such an apparent degree that, by August 9, the *New York Times* editorially advised him to appease dissident elements of the party for campaign purposes, without any intention of humoring them after election, but again specified that he have no truck with "the extremists" — i.e., the McCarthys and the Jenners.

On September 9 disaster struck Times Square. Senator McCarthy won renomination in Wisconsin by a record vote, polling 100,000 more than the combined vote of seven contenders on both Republican and Democratic tickets. On September 11, Mr. Arthur Krock of the *Times* urged the need for "re-examination" of the Eisenhower campaign tactics. On September 12, Senator Taft yielded to General Eisenhower's frantic importunities and declared a readiness to help salvage what he could with his despised professional aid. Senator McCarthy promised modestly to assist.

As a man of honor, jockeyed into an uncomfortable position, Senator Taft could do no less. His earnest plea to his followers to support Eisenhower was unlikely to prevail with all of them, for they thought the wrong man was running. Nor was Senator McCarthy's good will likely to benefit a man who had inferentially refused to touch him with a 10-foot pole. To cap this series of ironies, the *New York Times* and its Mr. Krock, on the very morning of McCarthy's unprecedented victory, conceded in response to a criticism of Governor Stevenson that it had originally plumped for Eisenhower to head off Taft and the "calamitous" consequences of a Taft victory to its cherished foreign policy, but that had Mr. Stevenson been in the running at the time it would have been equally satisfied with him.

Eisenhower's candidacy has been governed by miscalculation and illogic from beginning to end. Anything thus blessed is certain to be rewarded according to the ancient rule that that which makes no sense will be crowned with success, and that which makes the least sense will be most certain of fulfillment. I submit that Eisenhower makes less sense than Stevenson, he makes less sense than Truman, he even makes less sense than Roosevelt. Anyone so endowed is in!

You may say, my former friends, that in these predictions I am insincere. Perhaps I am.

HUMAN EVENTS

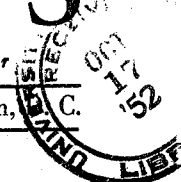
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How Ike Can Win: It is generally agreed, among political sages, that if Ike could take the 128 electoral votes of the South, he could afford to lose several big states in the North and still win the election.

But can he really win those states below the Mason-Dixon line? His popularity there appears strong. But political seers definitely hedge their bets, talk of capture of only 2 or 3 states with 20 or 30 electoral votes at best — not sufficient to make the touchdown.

What is the hitch? Most of the press has overemphasized the support given Ike by State governors, such as Byrnes, Kennon and Shivers, and glossed over the fact that Southern members of Congress, almost without exception, are staying “regular”, giving at least lip service to Stevenson (whom they dislike). For example, it has just been publicly reported that the Byrd machine in Virginia is quietly helping the Stevenson ticket. Governors are not enough. So long as the Southern members of Congress refuse to back and help Ike, the chances of the General winning sufficient Southern electoral votes to affect the outcome of the election remain very dim.

What can be done about it? The more discerning political experts here believe there is a way that the situation could be saved for Ike if he took a very bold and imaginative step. But he'll have to act quickly and courageously.

This is the problem: The reason why Southern members of Congress (despite their personal preference for Ike over Stevenson) stay “regular Democratic” is their concern about the committee chairmanships and committee seniority rights — prerogatives of majority members — in Congress. Only a Washington observer who watches Capitol Hill week by week can understand the enormous importance and power of a chairman of a major committee in the Senate or the House. He virtually wields the power of life or death over bills by which the socialistic Executive arm constantly seeks to win passage in the legislative branch. Among other things, these chairmanships in Congress are strong bastions behind which Southerners can fight off Fair Deal “civil rights” bills.

Hence, Southern members fear that an Ike victory might bring a GOP majority in Congress and thereby deprive them of chairmanships and majority prerogatives during the next session. Such a prospect deflates their enthusiasm for Ike and renders them philosophical about an Adlai victory. A Democratic President would presumably bring in a Democratic majority in Congress. The Southerners happen to enjoy more seniority (having been in Congress longer than most Northern Democrats) and would therefore continue to sit at or near the head of the committee room table.

Solution: What is the solution? Ike would obviously have to offer these Southerners an attractive *quid pro quo* to get their support in the election campaign. He would have to guarantee to the Southerners that they will continue in chairmanships in which they are senior to Republicans — whether he himself wins or not.

This sounds like a big order, but actually it is not so difficult as it seems. If the Republicans would agree to merge their committee seniorities with those of the Southern Democrats, an equitable division of the chairmanships would emerge. The Southerners, many of whom have been longer in office than the GOP members, would retain almost all of the major chairmanships they now occupy. The Republicans would be awarded the chairmanships now held by Northern Democrats. This is an example of how it would work out: Democratic Senator George (Ga.) would continue to hold the post of Chairman

of the powerful Finance Committee; Republican Congressman Taber (N.Y.) would get the chairmanship of the important House Appropriations Committee — now held by the Northern Fair Deal Democrat, Congressman Clarence Cannon (Mo.). And so on.

But to accomplish this scheme, Ike would have to persuade Senator Taft and Representative Joe Martin (GOP leaders of the two Houses) to line up their GOP colleagues and then to put the proposition to the *conservative* Southern Democratic leaders in the Congress. These leaders would have to go into private conference and negotiate. Immediate and semi-permanent advantages of the plan (no matter who wins the Presidency) would be obvious to both groups.

If such an arrangement could be made, experts believe, the Southern Congressmen would gladly stump for the election of Ike in their states. Even more importantly in the long run for those who dream of a “new party” or political realignment, the arrangement would create the real basis for a new party, for the union of the conservatives of both parties into a new setup expressing the will of the majority of the American people.

The Coalition: The Congressional “angle” in the election considerations (as described above) keeps cropping up here in Washington constantly. A few weeks ago, we noted that many Southern members of Congress while detesting Stevenson’s policies were constrained to prefer him as President to General Eisenhower. They prized the coalition with Republican conservatives in Congress which has worked well for some sessions, and they expressed fear that Ike, influenced by the GOP “liberals” who nominated him, would break up this coalition if he were President.

This view, we find, is by no means confined to Southern Congressmen. Recently a Northern GOP member of Congress passed through Washington and told us he felt the same way about the election. He calculated that if Ike were elected the “liberals” might surround him in the White House and that under this guidance Ike might force usually sound GOP members of Congress to support “liberal” measures by his power of patronage. With some vividness, this member described just how this pressure might be applied to himself, through “gimme” groups in his own constituency.

After listening to this warning, we received a letter from a prominent Republican in Ike’s own state of Kansas. This Kansan had doubts about supporting Ike for the following good reasons: “What I am trying to get at is: (1) with Eisenhower in the White House the Congressional coalition will fall apart, or at least be much weakened; and (2) the chance for forming a new party, a conservative party of the South and West, based on this coalition in Congress, will be diminished.

“Without that coalition, the Taft-Hartley Act could not have been passed. Without that coalition its repeal could not have been blocked in the 81st and 82nd Congresses. The extent to which the extension of the Truman Welfare State program has been blocked in the past six years has been due to this coalition.”

To those who take this attitude, the plan outlined above for merging the conservatives of the two parties in Congress and dividing chairmanships would come as probably the only important constructive move of the Ike campaign. If such a merger in Congress could be brought about, conservative fears about the fate of the coalition under an Eisenhower Presidency would vanish.

Adlai’s Enemy: Those in Washington who watch the great game of politics and score the points wonder whether Adlai hasn’t “put his foot in it” by last Saturday’s speech in which, obviously attacking “McCarthyism”, he likened the work of the Wisconsin Senator to the “inquisition”. Now, publishers and publicists know there are few references which anger Roman Catholics so much as this, nor fail to delight anti-Catholic bigots.

Indeed, the use of the word may well have been calculated. Many professional politicians have long regarded the drive against “McCarthyism” as in part designed to fan the flames of anti-Catholic feelings. (This observation, although often made privately, rarely reaches print.)

Some observers have come to hold that this religious angle was one of the reasons why the "smear strategists" of the Administration "chose" McCarthy, back in 1950, to be the scapegoat. Why didn't they go for Nixon or Mundt or Wood or Dondero, who had been even more vocal than McCarthy? The answer given is that McCarthy as a Catholic would prove more vulnerable, and that the Wisconsin Senator was relatively unknown and considered unskilled and "dumb" in the national political arena. (How these Fair Deal strategists erred in the latter!) No one here really believes that McCarthy had any vision of himself as leader of an anti-Communist movement; no one was more surprised than he when he found himself a storm center. His first speech in West Virginia in February, 1950, received little place in the press.

So, if Adlai last week, in his desperate clutching for headlines, sought to go a little further in this line of bigoted anti-McCarthy talk, he may have gone too far for his political good.

Trillion Dollar Dream: Candidate Stevenson provided confirmation of the dreary picture of social security (as presented in our September 22 number), to wit, that the obligations of the Social Security Administration so far built up are astronomical in terms of dollars, while the Government has spent the money collected as premiums from citizens and has comparatively few reserves to eventually satisfy these obligations as they fall due.

In Stevenson's speech in Columbus, Ohio, on October 3, the Democratic candidate said: "Today 65 million people . . . have built up substantial equities in this social security system. When you and your wife reach the age of 65, your share in the retirement fund will amount to the equivalent of a \$15,000 annuity."

Adlai prudently did not work out the arithmetic for his listeners and give them the truly staggering total. Multiplying 65 million (people) by \$15,000 we get the total of \$975 billion, or nearly a trillion dollars of liability.

And what has the Government accumulated in reserve to satisfy the "insured" who will demand these "annuities"? The fact is that we have only \$219 million in cash and about \$15 billion in Government bonds.

Q. E. D.

Socialism: The left-wing socialist Aneurin Bevan won more power in the British Labor Party during last week's annual convention. Bevan is a firm supporter of the nationalization of industries which has had such a lethal effect on the British economy — a fact that prompts Lord Winster, writing for the *Baltimore Sun* (October 5) to remark:

"He (Bevan) dares not admit that nationalization, the cornerstone of his political creed, has become rather an out-of-date idea. He excuses its failures by saying we have not had enough of it and all would be well if we had more. This vaguely reminds me of the medical student who admitted that he did not know what was the matter with an ailing child but would give it an injection. When asked 'why' he replied, 'it will give the child fits and and I know how to cure fits'."

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FRANK C. HANIGHEN, Editor.

Sworn to and subscribed before me this Sixteenth day of September, 1952.

NETHA L. HEALY,

Notary Public, District of Columbia. Term expires May 31, 1953.

Midcentury Journey: by William L. Shirer. New York. Farrar, Straus and Young. \$3.50. Reviewed by William Henry Chamberlin.

They learned nothing and they forgot nothing. Talleyrand uttered this quip about the Bourbons of France. But it would apply equally well to a school of crusading leftist publicists of our own time. These men were not necessarily conscious Communist sympathizers. Most of them by this time have even paid lip service to anti-Communism, while displaying a curious preference for anti-Communists over Communists as their targets of attack. But the service they have rendered to the Kremlin, insofar as they have influenced American public opinion and foreign policy, is almost inestimable.

What did Stalin most want in the critical pre-war years? That the war should start as a struggle between Germany, Japan and Italy, on one side, and the western powers on the other, with the Soviet Union gleefully sitting it out on the sidelines. And who was more serviceable for this purpose than the crusading one-sided "anti-fascist" journalist, columnist or commentator who centered all his fire on fascism, forgetting that Communism was equally obnoxious and might well be far more dangerous in the postwar world.

What did Stalin want during the war? A mental attitude in the western countries of unlimited trust, making for a policy of consistent appeasement and steady surrender to his demands, with Yalta as the climax. Who again more serviceable for this purpose than the aforesaid type of thinker?

(William L. Shirer, according to Robert E. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins* [page 870] referred to the Yalta sell-out of Poland and China as "a landmark in human history" and Raymond Gram Swing, now an adviser to the Voice of America, went him one better on that occasion by declaring that "no more appropriate news could be conceived to celebrate the birthday of Abraham Lincoln".)

Finally, what are Stalin's main political objectives in the postwar world? Maximum division among non-Communist countries, a perpetuation of wartime hates and suspicions among these countries and a soft attitude toward Communist espionage and intrigue in the non-Communist nations.

On all these counts, Mr. Shirer's book seems to fill the bill admirably. Although *Midcentury Journey* purports to be a kind of 1950 political travelogue, there is almost nothing in the book about concrete measures for fighting Communism at home or abroad.

Shirer fights the battle of Munich all over again, but has nothing to say about the more relevant subject of Yalta. He sings elegies for Czechoslovakia without ever stopping to think that something must have been wrong with a country which twice gave up its independence without firing a shot in self-defense. He expends the vials of his wrath on the "traitorous" Petain — an adjective to which few non-Communist Frenchmen would today subscribe.

He is gloomy and alarmed about the more rational recent phase of American policy toward Germany — without once suggesting how it would be possible to defend Europe against the Soviet threat without drawing Germany into a position of political and military equal partnership.

His comments on America fit the same pattern of standard leftist clichés. Senator McCarthy is a "second-rate Goebbels". America is full of "fear", intolerance and "witch hunting", where anonymous individuals sidle up to one and say: "You will be destroyed if you don't watch out." There is a complete whitewash of the Administration's pitiful record in China and there is no mention of Hiss and the Rosenbergs and the many other proved cases of disloyalty which make vigilance against Communist infiltration an elementary necessity.

The penalty for writing such a book in this age of the "terrible witch hunt"? It is a Literary Guild selection, published to an accompaniment of enthusiastic tributes from a number of the author's colleagues.

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